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Appl. No. 10/765,633
Amdt. dated November 1, 2004
Reply to Office action of October 5, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-61 were originally filed in this Application.

In this amendment, Claims 1, 2, 58 -60 have been amended.

Claim 61 has been canceled.

Claim 62 has been added.

Claims 3-57 remain unchanged.

In the Action of October 5, 2004, the Examiner entered a 5-way restriction requirement, as follows:

Group	Claims	Drawn To:
I	1-20	A poultry house
II	21-50	A tube coupling
III	51-57	A clip for suspending and aligning the watering system tubing
IV	58	A method of assembling a watering line
V	59-61	A method of assembling an animal drinking system

The Examiner asserted that Group V was drawn to an animal watering device. Applicants respectfully point out that, in accordance with the preamble for Claims 59-61, these claims are drawn to a method of assembly an animal drinking system. Hence, Claims 59-61, as originally submitted, were method or process claims, rather than product claims.

In this amendment, independent Claims 1 and 59 have been amended. Independent Claim 1 has been amended to substantially remove the description of the clips which suspend the watering line from the stabilizing bar. The subject matter removed from Claim 1 has been added back in as new Claim 62. Hence,

Page 16 of 18

01 November 2004
Document 2

Appl. No. 10/765,633
Amdt. dated November 1, 2004
Reply to Office action of October 5, 2004

Claim 1, as now presented is directed to an animal house which includes the coupling mechanism of Claim 21. Thus, Applicants respectfully assert that Groups I and II can properly be combined as a single group.

Claim 59 has been amended to be a product, rather than a method claim. Claim 59 as now written is directed an animal drinking system which includes "means for coupling and rotationally aligning adjacent pipe segments together and positively fixing the rotational position of adjacent pipe segments relative to each other". With the amendments to Claims 59-60, Applicants respectfully assert that Group V now properly belongs with Group II.

Hence, Applicant respectfully requests that, in view of the amendments to the claims, that the Examiner redraw the restriction requirement into three groups as follows: Group I – Claims 1-50, 59-60 and 62; Group II – Claims 51-57; and Group III – Group 58. If the Examiner agrees to redraw the restriction requirement, then Applicants elect Group I of the redrawn restriction, Claims 1-50, 59-60 and 62.

As an alternative, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner combine Groups I and II into a single group comprising Claims 1-50 and 62. In this instance, Applicants elect the redrawn Group I, Claims 1-50 and 62.

As a second alternative, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner combine Groups II and V into a single group comprising Claims 21-50 and 59-60. In this instance, Applicants elect to pursue the redrawn Group II, Claims 21-50 and 59-60.

Appl. No. 10/765,633
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Lastly, if the Examiner opts not to redraw the restriction requirement, then
Applicants elect to pursue Group II, Claims 21-50.

Dated: 11/1/04

Respectfully Submitted,


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